

# Curriculum Is Power

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*AUTHOR'S NOTE: While the following description may be more romantic than real, the writing of it was a kind of antidote to the frustration caused by reading and hearing statements describing curriculum in terms of the finite dimensions of a shaped behavior, a prescribed or mediated message, or a package and a basal text.—LJB*

● Curriculum is not the teacher's guide or the textbook. It is not reshuffling old ideas or shaping ancient dust. Nor is it claiming memories from musty rituals of yesterday; nor searching out the tired traditional bins.

● Curriculum is not a placid pond into whose depths we cast an artifact or fragment and watch the widening ripples gently spend themselves into oblivion.

● Curriculum is, instead, a waterfall with power and flow; it is a plunging, moving process that cannot be stopped, although you can channel it, and you can harness it.

● The rush of curriculum in any given situation admits only a quick historical review, as when we scan a photo or a sketch. Unless, of course, we choose to look up-

stream. Upstream means youth and their propensities, larger learnings and social imperatives, each individual and his unique perceptions. These in concert must be studied as an entity with thrust and consequence.

● This curriculum power moves through schools and their communities. Each learner, patron, or professional is captured by its mainstream, or slowly drifts within its shoreline eddies. A learning society is filled with its volume; a rigid society restricts its flow; a stagnant society rejects its great potential.

● To reshape curriculum demands review of the before and after, and a recognition that each change is causal and significant. Such change involves at minimum a willingness to wade into the shallows, or better yet to be immersed within its depth.

● Our time demands real changes, with a deep regard for all this power and continuity.

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